instances to know what values were given them at the time the dictionaries were compiled. The transliteration of Indian Buddhist terms and names, much of which took place in T'ang times on a large and accurate scale (and previously somewhat casually), also affords useful evidence.

It is clear that extensive changes have taken place in the colloquial. In many instances final consonants have been elided and initial consonants altered. It is possible, too, that at one time the Chinese language possessed some inflections, at least with differences in case. One theory has it that spoken Chinese gives evidence of being an old language. It declares that while English has gone part way toward ridding itself of inflections, Chinese by completely eliminating all conjugations and declensions has departed even further from its youth.

The causes for the changes are at least four. Chinese has not been recorded by a type of writing fitted to preserve existing; sounds. The invasions which periodically overwhelmed the North and left more or less permanent deposits of immigration led to the kind of alterations which occur when foreigners acquire a new tongue. The migrations of the Chinese themselves, principally southward, in some instances have made for variation. For instance, the Hakkas, settlers in the South from the North, have kept themselves distinct in dialect from those around them. Then there are the modifications which the years seem always to bring in a living language, just from the fact that it is being spoken.

It is to be expected that a language used by so many people over so wide an area and over so many centuries will develop dialects. Chinese has a great many of them, of

which numbers are mutually unintelligible. They are especially prevalent in the coast provinces from Shanghai south. A man from Canton, for instance, who knows only his own dialect, cannot understand a man from Peiping or Nanking. The dominant form is that called *mandarin* by foreigners and known in Chinese as *kuan hua,* literally "the official speech." Technically *kuan hua* is the language of the court and its capital—Pekingese under most of the Ming and all of the Ch'ing. However, while the Peking dialect was long standard, variations of the *mandarin* are spoken over the major portion of China proper and Manchuria and by a large majority of the Chinese. While some of the patois, especially in rural dis-